

## Historical Society of Palm Desert

Box 77 - Palm Desert, Ca. 92261

Phone: (619) 346-6588

SPRING / SUMMER 1994

"THE HOURGLASS"

NEWSLETTER

### ART SHOW - One of the Happiest Collaborations of Springtime

Under sponsorship of the Historical Society of Palm Desert, the Shadow Mountain Palette Club held a week-long art exhibit/sale at Society Headquarters on March 20-26. Lourina McGhee, president of the Palette Club, and Bob Keedy, Society Board Member, headed up the successful effort. Fifty paintings were displayed inside the building and on the velvety green lawn out front. A reception on Sunday the 20th brought art lovers flocking to view the artwork and interest was high during the week. All genre were represented, including scapes, portraits and still lifes, with a wide variety of subjects in both oil and watercolor.

At a Palette Club luncheon subsequent to the show, a plaque outlining the history of the Palette Club was given to the Historical Society. The Shadow Mountain Palette Club was founded in 1961 and enjoys the distinction of being one of the oldest art associations in the valley. President Ed Mullins and Bob Keedy were on hand to accept the plaque, which is currently on display at Society Headquarters. Do drop in to see it.

Bob Keedy expressed pleasure at the fine exposure given to the work of the artists; also, it was an opportunity for the public to become acquainted with the Society, its location and preservation purposes. Discussions are underway.....hoping to repeat the art show in the Spring of 1995. Something to anticipate!

### PALM DESERT'S SPRING FEST - April 16 on El Paseo April 17 at Civic Center Park

The Historical Society had a table and photo display at the park on Sunday. Fire Engine #1 was there too, and was as popular as ever with the children. To say that Bob Keedy was busy would be an understatement. He took 75 Polaroid pictures of kids posing with the engine. Children and parents were delighted to have a photo souvenir of the day.

Helping at the display were Ginny Folkers, Edwin and Theda Lundquist, Jan Holmlund, and B. J. and Dan Callahan. Many stopped to view the displays, to chat and to reminisce. Among them were Dan Kelly, Bill Carver, Henry Langer, Jean Benson, the Leachmans, Sally, her husband and their little ones having a "family day in the park."

Roger Keezer, who usually sets up and presides at photo exhibits, and his wife, Maria, were in Charlotte, North Carolina. They attended a gathering of Mustang cars and owners, which was held April 15-17 at the Charlotte Motor Speedway. Over 3000 cars were entered in the event and Roger won first prize for the most original restoration of his Mustang. The Keezers were thrilled to be there and they got to shake hands with President Clinton. Congratulations, Roger!! Any time you can bring home the prize, we'll cover for you at the Historical Society!

### ARCHIVAL NOTES from Ginny Folkers - painstaking work but worth it!

Presently, we have approximately 1400 items (mostly newspaper articles) in our permanent archive files. About 30% of the archives came from the collection of Hal Kapp, a local realtor who was very active in the community, and.....a saver!

There are a number of steps involved in the preservation procedure: dating, clipping, trimming, filing, sorting chronologically, cataloging, typing, accessioning, treating, gluing, labeling, and research. If you would like to join our crew of volunteers, call 346-6588 and leave your name and phone number. We will be on the job all summer.



**ARCHIVAL NOTES (cont'd)**

We are interested in collecting newspaper articles (with source & date info in pencil) having to do specifically with the Palm Desert area prior to 1960. Also, did anyone save the October 1968 Daily News series entitled "Ike on the Desert." Some parts are missing from our collection. Items given by Rheo Lawman and Fay Bowie (who contributed a large quantity from Anne Carpenter) are being processed.

Workers include: Cheryl Schuler, Mary Safe and Ruth Miller. Ruth was the Downey City Librarian from 1958-83 and both she and Mary were Charter Members of the Downey Historical Society. New workers are: Shirlee Smith and Jean Goldmann. Shirlee and her husband, Fred, are long-time desert visitors and recent full-time transplants from the Tacoma area where they were active in civic affairs. Jean, a retired secretary, says she has moved so many times in her life that she likes to work with historical organizations to learn about her new community. Thanks to all these wonderful volunteers!

**FIRST EVER ELECTION BY MAIL BALLOT**

New Officers and Board Members were elected by mail ballot April 27. Jean Benson chaired the Nominating Committee and presented the ballot count at the Spring board meeting. A big "Thank You" to the membership for such a healthy and positive response.....with your own envelope and stamp, too!

Officers elected for a two-year term are: President, Bob Keedy; Vice President, Jean Hollenbeck; Immediate Past-President, Ed Mullins; Secretary, Ginny Folkers; Treasurer, Jean Martin. Also elected were nine members to the Board of Directors, who will serve staggered terms of one to three years. Officers and Board Members will be installed in October. Look for profile sketches in future issues of 'The Hourglass.'

**"CITIZEN OF THE YEAR" - Ed Mullins**

Recently the Palm Desert Rotary Club presented their annual "Citizen of the Year" award to our retiring president. No.....the term "retiring" doesn't apply to Ed Mullins. He will never retire as long as he can be of service to his beloved city. The Rotarians honored Ed at a luncheon with a handsome plaque, and many friends were there to join in the recognition.

**FOUNDERS DAY 1994**

At 4:00 p.m. on Friday, May 13, members and City Council people began to gather at Society Headquarters. A huge platter of sandwiches, plates of cookies and a punch bowl graced the tea table. As all the chairs and standing room filled up, President Ed Mullins opened the formal festivities. Marion Henderson was introduced and got ready to reveal her secret. Who would be the 10th annual recipient of the Founder's Day award? A hush fell over the audience, people leaned forward in anticipation, cameras were poised and ready. ....and the winner is.....Jean Benson!! A smile lit every face as applause broke out. Jean is a long-time travel agent in Palm Desert, a loyal City Council person, an avid community service worker, and a staunch supporter of the Historical Society. Congratulations, Jean!! I WONDER WHO WILL BE CHOSEN NEXT YEAR?

**KENNEDY FILM LIBRARY continues vital preservation - the latest from Roger Keezer**

Roger has completely filled the large photo album donated by Bob Keedy with interesting, period photographs for the perusal of drop-in visitors at the Society. Also, a second video is being compiled for use at headquarters and to be loaned to service clubs. A few identifications remain to be made and narration will complete the project.



**KENNEDY FILM LIBRARY (cont'd.)**

The excellent 84-page supplement on Palm Desert which appeared in the February '94 issue of Palm Springs Life magazine has been separately bound and free copies are available at the Palm Desert Chamber of Commerce. The lead-off article "Then and Now" subtitled 'A Dream Come True,' by De Ann Lubell drew upon the resources of the Kennedy Film Library for illustrations to the fascinating account of Palm Desert's beginnings and its development through five decades.

**JEAN HOLLENBECK did it again! Society's Spring Luncheon, April 29.  
A day to remember.**

Arrangements for the Spring luncheon, held on mezzanine level at Embassy Suites, produced a thoroughly delightful event. Bonnie Bowie and Ginny Folkers were at the reservation table, and Fay Bowie at the guest book. President Ed Mullins presided, Dan Callahan led the Pledge of Allegiance and Del Sharbutt delivered the invocation.

Lowell Weeks, retired Coachella Valley Water District manager, was the guest speaker. Born and raised in Imperial Valley, he came to the Coachella Valley in 1950, after a stint in the military and graduation from the University of Southern California.

Delving into history to the time when Palm Desert was a station know as "Sand Hole" along the Bradshaw Trail from 1862-1877, Weeks related facts concerning development in the early part of the century. In the '40s the King Gillette ranch, Palm Village (8-10 houses) and the Army's large motor pool for desert-training, presented a very different scene from what we see today.

Week's tenure at the Water District from 1950-1986, gave him a unique perspective on development. His engineering credentials and his vital interest in water systems, bond issues and flood control contributed immeasurably to development of the area. He related interesting anecdotes of early times when Palm Desert area residents sometimes felt like "stepchildren" of Riverside County. That feeling led to formation of a citizen's planning commission to advise the County Board of Supervisors, which Weeks described as a "pseudo city council."

There was little interest from the general public in flood protection in the 1950s. One citizen/ engineer advised people to dig 6 to 8 postholes in their backyards and fill them with gravel. That was sufficient flood control.

As waterlines went from 2" to 8" to 12", citizens and developers balked. Weeks described some of the amusing situations he encountered as needed changes were made. One subdivision boasted its installation of several fire hydrants, but they were decorative only.....no water lines attached!

In matters historical, the truth can be funny. A retired, knowledgeable person like Weeks need do nothing more than lay out the facts to be very entertaining, indeed.

**FROM BONNIE BOWIE'S THANK-YOU FOLDER....gifts of money/service/  
materials/equipment**

Anonymous Donor = \$200.00

Russ Marshall = donated check (\$55.) to cover  
maintenance work on office  
copy machine

Edwin Lundquist = real-to-reel tape player,  
speakers & tapes

Sherm Smith = Incorporation info  
about Palm Desert &  
newspaper articles.

Jack Macy = cleaned building floors

Linny & Stuart Smith = Nikon  
camera



**DUES STRUCTURE:**

|                  |                             |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Individual \$15. | Patron \$250.               |
| Family \$20.     | Life \$1000.                |
| Patron \$250.    | Business/Organization \$50. |

Dues reminders are being sent out according to the month that members paid their dues in 1993. If you want to pay early or upgrade your category, we will accept all dues and increases most graciously and thank you for your generous support!

Thank you to new member but long-time desert resident, Irene Dodds, who sent an account of "How the Site for the College of the Desert was Chosen." She and her late husband, Bill Dodds, had a significant role in the site selection.....and we are grateful for the foresight demonstrated in these pioneering efforts.

Theda Lundquist, Editor